

In The Wake Of An Unnatural Disaster (Part Three)

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In the previous series, which I titled, *Mightier Than the Sword*, one purpose was to show that warfare is fought by other means than guns and swords. Words are also weapons and they are used to destroy the character of an enemy by persuading them to simply surrender. And it works.

That is exactly what Satan has done. It has taken him a long time to get under the skin of folks in the Western world, but he has been tremendously successful. His religions of humanism and secularism, besides what is called Christian, set the immoral standards for our time. They are an unmitigated disaster compared to true Christianity and it has not been necessary to fight a shooting war to impose it on the Western world. But for those who are truly Christian and those who may not be converted but are sincerely striving to obey God, it is making life a great deal more difficult.

To me, it compares to living in an area immediately following the passing through of an earthquake, hurricane, flood, or tornado. We are alive but living in the midst of a devastating destruction. In this case, it is the destruction of people's understanding about much of life's basic requirements for living peacefully and productively in a community. It is not the devastation of property, but the devastation of understanding, or attitudes and conduct because people are no longer, in many cases, even aware of very much truth regarding right and wrong. We are living in the midst of many minds undeveloped by truth—that is, God's truth.

A clear example is that every day thousands of abortions are performed, and many people seemingly have no idea they are actually murdering a fellow human being who simply has not yet developed enough to have a sustained life outside the womb.

The moral revolution occurring in the Western world is not a natural disaster. The natural disasters I named are parts of the nature God created and they

can happen because the forces that produce them come together as God created them to do naturally, and thus they occur.

However, mankind in the Western world has deliberately chosen to make the unnatural disaster we are living in and through. It doesn't have to be this way, and God, the Judge of all mankind, states in His word that in His judgment mankind is without excuse. We brought it on ourselves because of our ancestors in previous generation, and in some cases, we brought it on ourselves by listening to the wrong teaching.

This is the issue that springs from understanding the truth contained in Ecclesiastes 7:29. That verse states that God created man upright but we have sought out many schemes. Satan has done his deception well, partly because he is dealing with people he has already prepared to some degree to accept his lies because they have been listening to them all their life.

Here is an example of this profound and deadly ignorance. Within the past two weeks, a killing by an off-duty police officer took place in Northlake Mall here in Charlotte. The boy killed was an older teenager and gang member.

According to the police report, he went to the Mall with a group of friends. But while there, they got into an argument with members of a rival group. It was apparently an unplanned meeting. The war of words between them drew a crowd of people. The police officer was drawn to the commotion. When he arrived, the boy had already drawn his revolver. The police officer commanded him to drop the gun. Instead, in full view of many witnesses, he aimed it directly at the officer, who then fired one shot, killing him almost instantly.

The reporter I was listening too said the police reported the boy had a rap sheet as long as a person's arm. This was only a teenager, and maybe that is an exaggeration. But I will take it at least for what it was intended to convey. The reporter continued on, interviewing the boy's mother and father, and they both said, "he was a good boy." What do they mean by "good"? Have they lost any conception of what "good" means?

The mother specifically admitted during the interview that the boy was often in trouble with the police. Do the parents not understand what good and bad is that they justify saying he was a good boy. Where does that standard come from when his so-called goodness produced death for himself?

Why didn't the boy simply obey the authority of the policeman? The very fact that, even by his mother's comment about him almost constantly being in trouble with the police, the boy, when commanded by the policemen to drop the gun, responded by doing what he consistently did. He did what he wanted to do. His character was set according to the wrong standard. He had been taught by his parents and Satan's worldly system to do what he good and well pleased to do. Thus, there was a quick but temporary resolution to this crisis of conduct.

He died in the blink of an eye before many witnesses, proving the Proverb that states that there is a way that seems right but the end thereof is the way of death. If the standard is not God's, death is the end whether it comes quickly or after a long period of time.

This occurrence has an application to us. Last Sabbath, we heard a sermon that centered strongly on child training ["A Heritage and a Reward"], but I am looking beyond our children to the fact that we are the children of God. What truly matters is how seriously do we take what our Father says in His Word.

I recently read a startling statement made by a Bible commentator that really impacted on me. He said, "A child has only one responsibility in life. It is to obey his parents perfectly." Where in this world did the man get such an outlandish concept? He said he got it from the Bible. Can you imagine that? "I got it from the Bible."

The greatest Man who ever lived did exactly that, thus setting the pattern of conduct for all to follow. He obeyed His Father perfectly without failing even once, right on up to and including His death. We can reason around what He accomplished in order to give ourselves justifications. But all our justifications don't erase the reality of the standard He set, does it?

The boy in the mall reacted to what he believed; he reacted to the standard set in his mind by the world and the life he had chosen to live to the time of his death. It was ingrained in his heart.

How are we progressing judging, as shown by what we do? Because as James 2 clearly shows, it is conduct that reveals what one really believes. So, what is really ingrained up to this time in our heart? Thus, when push comes to shove, the bottom line is, DO WE REALLY BELIEVE GOD?